



Raised Bill No. 1093 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE CONCERNING EDUCATION

February 26, 2023

Senator Douglas McCrory
Representative Jeffrey Currey
Members of the Education Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3100
Hartford, CT 06106

To: Senator Douglas McCrory, Representative Jeffrey Currey honorable members of the Education Committee:

The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), representing the superintendents of Connecticut's public schools and over a hundred other executive district leaders, would like to share its comments about **Raised Bill No. 1093 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE CONCERNING EDUCATION.**

As co-chair of the Suspension and Expulsion Workgroup, I strongly endorse this group's recommendations. In a perfect world, the best policy would be not to have any suspensions and expulsions other than for egregious offenses; however, this would require an avalanche of funding to provide the necessary therapeutic settings and restorative practices throughout the state. Since this is probably not a reality now, we ask that you fully consider our recommendations.

If districts continue to have high numbers of suspensions and expulsions, they should develop, implement and submit a plan for improvement to the State Department of Education. "If you keep on doing the same old thing, you will get the same results." It is essential that they review their data, especially regarding children of color, and envision new ways of making a difference in these numbers with a sense of urgency.

Prevention is the best solution. Working on reducing class size, especially in our most challenged districts at the early grade levels, should be a non-negotiable. Having 30 students in a grade one classroom, or any classroom, will not allow teachers to develop the relationships with students necessary to build trust, resulting in fewer behavior incidents. It will also give teachers the ability to de-escalate situations before the behavior is out of hand.

Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents

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If a child is expelled, a suitable educational program must be provided so that the student does not fall behind and feels that second chances are not possible and success cannot be attained. If a student thinks that success eludes them, dropping out becomes appealing. We can't let that happen.

As you already know, the tragedy of suicide is all too common among our adolescents and young adults; we must be aware of any tendencies and the very effective assessments that are available to do that. We must employ them and follow up.

Many of these recommendations require significant funding, but not implementing them will cost so much more. What's more important than the overall success of every child entrusted to our care?

Thank you for reading this and for your commitment to the students of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Fran Rabinowitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Fran" and last name "Rabinowitz" clearly legible.

Fran Rabinowitz

Executive Director

Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents